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Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

TEMP Max 25 | Min 21 | Humidity 55% Partly Cloudy Sensex 79,802 | Nifty 24,131 | Gold 76,400 | Silver 88,930 | Dollar 84.56 | Euro 89.34 | GBP 107.64

GREEN THUMBS DOWN

BDA faces flak for bungling up sapling planting efforts at its layouts by not involving locals, using non-native species

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TAKE A DEEP BREATH

Central Environment Ministry data shows Bengaluru has recorded 24% reduction in PM10 levels over last six years

PAGE 5

State pollution board analyses water quality of 113 lakes across city, finds several have above acceptable limits of metals such as lead, copper, nickel

TOXIC FLOW

Karihobanahalli and Shivapura lakes laden; 15 lakes heavy on iron

Nayandanahalli Lake was found to have higher than permissible limits of iron

PAGE 6: BBMP'S BIG PLANS FOR LAKES

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Metals such as lead, copper, chromium, nickel, and iron above acceptable limits have been detected in water samples from multiple lakes in Bengaluru.

In a first, the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) has analysed water quality of 113 lakes across the city for the presence of eight heavy metals - cadmium, copper, lead, chromium, nickel, zinc, iron, and manganese.

As per drinking water standards for trace and toxic metals prescribed by BIS 10500:2012, the permissible level of nickel is 0.02 mg/l, zinc is 5mg/l, cadmium is 0.003 mg/l, chromium is 0.05 mg/l, lead 0.01 mg/l,

> **"Water from many lakes in the city is used to irrigate agricultural fields and we have proof that heavy metals have already entered our food web. Quite a few vegetable samples were found to be contaminated in the past**
>
> —V Ramprasad, Friends of Lakes

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

Not a minor issue

Over last 4 years, 3,953 children found themselves caught in web of crime

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An increase in the number of juvenile crimes is causing unease in the city. Despite several schemes to help children engage in education, arts, and sports to build a better future, the number of juvenile crimes keeps rising. Over the last four years (2020-2024), a staggering 3,953 children have found themselves in legal trouble, with many housed in juvenile detention centres.

A recent shocking incident in the city highlighted this issue when a 16-year-old boy was involved in the brutal murder of a 20-year-old woman over a mere Rs 2,000. The case, which was registered at the Subramanyapura Police Station, gained significant media attention. Experts point to various factors contributing to this rise in juvenile crime, including the desire for money, emotional upheaval, dysfunctional family environments, peer pressure, poverty, ignorance, excessive pampering, discrimination and neglect from parents and teachers, mental instability, substance abuse, romantic entanglements, and exposure to inappropriate content on films and social media. These influences are leading children down destructive paths, even involving them in serious crimes such as murder.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Art celebration

MAP's annual event, Art is Life 2024 is happening in the city. The two-day festival showcases the transformative power of art through a vibrant blend of visual arts, music, performances, and thought-provoking discussions. The festival includes various film screenings, talks, panels, workshops and many more. One mesmering event happening today is renowned singer Rekha Bhardwaj performing live at MAP. Known for her soulful and distinct voice, she will reflect on the "voice" of women in Indian art and music through her performance. Join for a captivating evening and immerse yourself in her unique and powerful vocals. **Where: Museum of Art & Photography (MAP), first floor; When: December 1, 7.30 pm**

02 Theatre festival

Alchemist LIVE will present the highly anticipated debut of the Bengaluru Theatre Festival (BTF). Set to redefine the theatre scene in Bengaluru, BTF promises a captivating experience of live performances, star-studded casts, and unforgettable storytelling. Audiences can look forward to a handpicked selection of thought-provoking plays and fan favourites, featuring some of India's finest actors. The list includes legends like Naseeruddin Shah, Ratna Pathak Shah, Pankaj Kapur, Lillete Dubey, and more, who will take the stage to deliver powerful performances that will resonate with audiences. **Where: Good Shepherd auditorium; When: December 6 to 8, different timings**

03 Abstract exhibition

Sublime Galleria presents "Mystic Mirage," an art exhibition featuring exquisite works by renowned international artist Simon Kenny. Kenny's abstract paintings are internationally recognised and truly dynamic. Represented by some of the finest galleries in the UK and now expanding into both Europe and Asia, Simon's work is highly collectible across the globe. At times, his image can seem tranquil and harmonised whereas on a different day, the same scene can appear tumultuous and unruly. **Where: Sublime Gallery, UB City; When: December 6, 5-8 pm**

Powdered art
A participant draws rangoli during a competition organised by the Children and Women Welfare Department and Cubbon Park Walkers Association as part of the Kannada Rajyotsava celebrations at Cubbon Park on Saturday

Weather changes: Children not breathing easy in city

Due to seasonal changes, pollution and viral outbreak, respiratory illnesses are sky-rocketing in Bengaluru

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Doctors across hospitals in the city have observed a significant increase in cases of respiratory illnesses in recent weeks, with outpatient departments seeing a steep rise in patients, particularly among children and the elderly. Experts attribute this surge to seasonal changes, rising pollution levels, and a concurrent viral outbreak.

According to Dr Dhanalakshmi R, consultant-pediatrician and neonatologist, Motherhood Hospitals, HRBR Layout, Bengaluru, there has been a noticeable increase in respiratory illnesses in recent months, particularly during the late monsoon and early winter period, from September to November. "This spike has shown a surge of approximately 20% in reported cases compared to the same time frame in previous years. Seasonal factors, combined with changing environmental conditions, have significantly contributed to this increase, prompting concern among healthcare professionals. Doctors are seeing 4-5 cases every day, with 3-4 requiring immediate admissions per week," added Dr Dhanalakshmi.

She pointed out that the increase in respiratory illnesses can be attributed to a combination of factors, including seasonal changes, rising pollution levels, and viral outbreaks. Due to particulate matter and industrial emissions, poor air quality, and fluctuating temperatures weaken respiratory defenses. Additionally, the resurgence of viral infections post-pandemic as social activities normalise, has also played a significant role in the rise of these cases.

Patients typically come with persistent cough, nasal congestion, sore throat, shortness of breath, wheezing, and fever. Many also report fatigue, body aches, and, in severe cases, chest pain. In younger children, symptoms like rapid breathing or bluish discolouration of the skin may also be observed.

> **"With a 20% surge in cases, doctors are seeing 4-5 cases every day, with 3-4 requiring immediate admissions per week** – Dr Dhanalakshmi

Dr Ravi Kiran S, senior consultant in pediatrics & neonatology at Sakra World Hospital, noted that since this is the season, they are observing 25-30 cases in a month. "Different strains of influenza virus, rhinovirus, adenovirus, and RSV are the predominant viruses implicated. Though most of these are self-limiting in healthy children, they cause a significant amount of sickness in young children and those with ongoing respiratory allergies. Since the infectivity rate is very high, screening of infected children at school would go a long way in preventing these viruses from spreading. Pollution, vehicular or construction-based, is an easily understandable deleterious factor."

Safe distance, masks, and sanitising would be very helpful in preventing the spread of all these respiratory viruses

Doctors pointed out that children (under the age of five), the elderly (particularly those above 60), and individuals with pre-existing respiratory conditions such as asthma or COPD are the most vulnerable. Pregnant women and individuals with compromised immune systems, such as those with diabetes or undergoing chemotherapy, are also at higher risk of developing severe complications from respiratory illnesses. "Those with pre-existing conditions like asthma face heightened risks as the inflammation and constriction of airways can worsen with viral triggers or exposure to allergens and pollutants," said Dr Dhanalakshmi.

Highlighting the preventive measures that need to be taken, Dr Kiran said, "Yearly flu vaccination will prevent influenza viruses, whereas it wouldn't help for other viruses. Universal precautions learned during COVID times, that is, safe distance, masks, and sanitising would be very helpful in preventing the spread of all these respiratory viruses. Parents of school-going kids should take adequate precautions to prevent the spread to younger siblings who are more vulnerable. If the sickness is more than mild, breathing is fast, or if there is a chest indrawing or dull look, please consult your pediatrician for further guidance."

Crimes of passion: Murder & attempted suicide

A fight over frequent phone calls to a man's fiancee turned fatal after a confrontation. Two men Karthik HS (27) and Chetan Kumar NG (33), were arrested in connection with the murder of Abhishek, who was attacked on Friday night.

Abhishek, seeking to address concerns about Karthik's excessive phone calls to his fiancée, confronted him around 9 pm on Friday. This discussion escalated into a violent exchange. Karthik, accompanied by his accomplice Chetan Kumar, attacked Abhishek with a metal bangle, hitting him repeatedly on the head and face.

When Abhishek's friend Avinash tried to intervene, he too was savagely assaulted.

Despite being rushed to Victoria Hospital, Abhishek's condition worsened, and after days of unsuccessful treatment, he succumbed to his injuries on Monday in the midnight.

The absconding accused Karthik and Chetan were located and arrested by the Byadarahalli Police Station team, led by Inspector Veeranna S Magi.

The accused, both with criminal backgrounds, were taken into custody for interrogation. Karthik, a goods driver from Saibaba Nagar, and Chetan Kumar, a school van driver, now face serious charges of murder.

Suspicious husband sets woman on fire, attempts suicide

A man tried to end his own life after setting his wife on fire, after suspecting her of infidelity. The accused, Prabhu Jangli, from Kothanur, poured petrol on his wife Priyanka before setting her ablaze. Prabhu attempted suicide immediately after the act.

Both husband and wife are undergoing treatment and a case was registered on Thursday at the Konanakunte police station.

The couple, married for two years, had been embroiled in frequent quarrels, largely stemming from Prabhu's suspicions about Priyanka's fidelity.

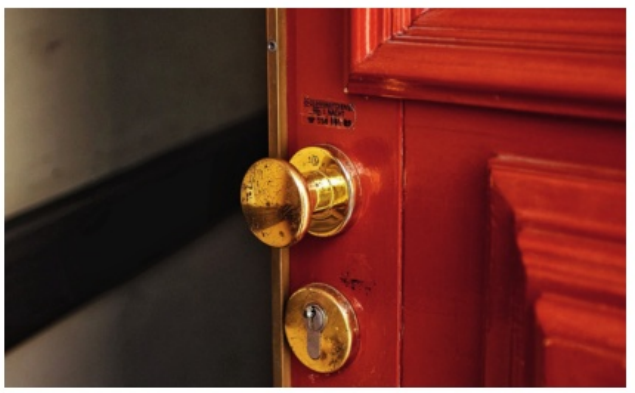
According to police officers, Prabhu used to drink heavily and often physically attacked his wife. Priyanka's relatives revealed that Prabhu's doubts were fueled by conversations with his sisters.

According to officials, Prabhu reportedly brought petrol and doused both himself and Priyanka before setting the fire around 5.30 pm on Wednesday. Priyanka suffered severe burns and both were rushed to Victoria Hospital. Both are receiving the treatment.

A case has been registered at the Konanakunte police station, and authorities have begun their investigation after they got a notice from the hospital about the incident. **BMB**

Web of interconnected crimes broken

2 arrested for house burglary and two-wheeler thefts



Police have uncovered a web of interconnected crimes, where individuals involved in a house burglary also turned out to be linked to the theft of multiple two-wheelers. Police have arrested two individuals, Raghu and SR Deepak, in connection with the burglary and thefts, following an investigation led by the Jnanabharathi Police. A few of the suspects were apprehended in September, after gold ornaments, cash, and a motorcycle was stolen from a house in Manganahalli.

The complainant, 61-year-old Khalid Nayaz Khan, reported a break-in at his house, in which gold jewellery weighing 220 grams, ₹50,000 in cash, an electronic reading device, and a bike were stolen. Following this, a detailed investigation was initiated.

As the investigation progressed, police arrested Raghu on September 24. Additional suspects were identified and arrested on November 21, including Deepak, Jaidepu, and Adaith Gowda. Authorities also seized stolen items, including gold ornaments valued at ₹9,50,000 (130 grams) and three stolen two-wheelers.

The complainant, 61-year-old Khalid Nayaz Khan, reported a break-in at his house, in which gold jewellery weighing 220 grams, ₹50,000 in cash, an electronic reading device, and a bike were stolen.

The stolen goods were recovered from multiple police stations across Bengaluru, including Byadarahalli, Subramanyapura, Kumbalagodu, and Rajarajeshwarinagar. The stolen bikes were also recovered from different locations. Investigations are ongoing, with a search for the remaining suspect, Mithun, who is currently absconding.

12 Pak nationals charged for illegal stay, document forgery

The police have submitted a charge sheet to the court after completing an investigation into 12 Pakistani nationals who were living illegally in Bengaluru.

The accused, including Rashid Ali Siddiqui (48), his wife Ayesha (38), and other relatives, have been charged under the Foreigners Act and for creating fake documents. The case was filed in the JMFC court of Anekal.

Rashid Ali Siddiqui, originally from Karachi, had arrived in India six years ago and settled in Rajapur, Jigani, under the false identity of Shankar Sharma. According to the police, Rashid and his family members had forged Indian documents, including passports. They were also reportedly associated with the 'Mehdi' Foundation, an organisation teaching Islam, and were allegedly receiving financial support for propaganda activities.

The investigation began on September 13 when police arrested Rashid and three others. Later, they apprehended additional relatives residing in Peenya. The police have completed the investigation of 12 individuals, but six more suspects remain under investigation. Authorities have stated that a separate charge sheet will be filed for these remaining suspects. **BMB**

Non-native species & bad timing: BDA's greening effort falls flat

BSK 6th Stage residents urge authorities to involve locals and focus on native species conservation efforts after recent saplings fail to survive

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(Above) Residents allege BDA replanted saplings in the same spot last year; (Below) Non-native species kept for planting at 4B Extension, BSK 6th Stage

The Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) has faced criticism over the years regarding its approach to sapling plantations. It has previously drawn attention for not adhering to the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) directives on planting saplings. Recently, the BDA has come under scrutiny again for not engaging local communities in the process and for choosing unsuitable species for plantation in its developed layouts.

The latest issue concerns the planting of non-native species at the 4B Extension of BSK 6th Stage, with residents raising concerns about the timing of the sapling plantation. "Thousands of non-native saplings are being planted here. Look at the timing of planting. It is the end of November and we are likely to not get much rain any more until summer is over. It is not clear why the authorities selected non-native species like Tabebuia. Saplings are being planted in the same locations as last year, where previous plantations failed to survive," said Subramanya Kodipadi, a resident.

The residents said that each sapling costs Rs 2300 of tax-payers money with maintenance of plants for 3 years. "The saplings planted in the last two to three days have already dried up. Where is the accountability? This is nothing but an utter lack of planning and scheming for loot in the name of planting. I request the officials to stop this madness and be more responsible and accountable. The best time to plant saplings is during monsoon and Namma Bengaluru needs only native saplings," he said. Expressing concern over the withered saplings, Vani Kishore, a resident, wanted the BDA officials to invite the local communities to be part of planning the planting of saplings. "We have many citizens in the neighbourhood who are well-versed and knowledgeable in what kind of saplings should be planted in the area," Vani Kishore said.

> **"Thousands of non-native saplings are being planted here. It is end of November and we are likely to not get much rain any more** – Subramanya K, resident

When informed, BDA Deputy Conservator of Forests Charan said that both the native and non-native species are being planted at the layouts developed by the BDA. "Planting of only native species will be a problem for the residents when these saplings grow trees. Such trees attract bats thus causing inconvenience to the residents. I want to assure the residents that best efforts will be made by the forest wing to make the layouts developed by the BDA greener," the Deputy Conservator of Forests said.

When informed about the ongoing planting of non-native species at 4B Extension of BSK 6th Stage, the DCF said that he would look into it. "The tender was floated last year for planting saplings at BSK 6th Stage. I am deputing my subordinates to consult the residents. We are replacing non-native species with native species," the DCF said.

Metal detected in our lakes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

copper 0.05 mg/l, and iron is 0.3mg/l. The report shows that while Karihobanahalli and Shivapura Lake have higher than permissible levels of lead, copper, chromium, and nickel, at least 15 other lakes were detected with high iron levels. "High levels of toxic heavy metals in Karihobanahalli and Shivapura Lake are probably due to their location. Both the lakes are situated next to the Peenya Industrial Area. Industrial effluent is high in heavy metals, which is showing in the case of the two water bodies," said a city-based researcher. High levels of copper were detected in the Nelamanagala and Devasandra lakes too.

Lakes with higher than permissible level of iron include Lalbagh, Kempambudhi, Yediyur, Nayandanahalli, Yella Mallapa Shetty, Vengaiyyanakere, Shivapura Tank, Begur, Gangondanahalli, Chhikkabanavara, Chelekere, Singapura, Vibhuthipura, Hosakerehalli, and Kannahalli.

Into the food chain

Experts say although the current concentration of heavy metals in surface water might not contaminate the groundwater table, they can surely enter our food web.

"Water from many lakes in the city is used to irrigate agricultural fields and we have proof that heavy metals have already entered our food web. Quite a few vegetable samples have been tested in the past and were found to be contaminated. Another area of concern is fish culture. Fish from contaminated lakes will surely impact our health," said V Ramprasad, Founder of Friends of Lakes. High exposure to these metals through food or water can lead to various health issues. While acute exposure to chromium may result in gastrointestinal disorders, hemorrhagic diathesis, convulsions, cardiovascular shock, and stomach cancer in some cases, higher levels of Lead may increase the risk of high blood pressure, cardiovascular problems, and kidney damage. Similarly, copper can lead to many health complications like liver and kidney diseases, cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, and cancer. Drinking water contaminated with copper may also lead to symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and liver damage in some people.

Waste disposal

Apart from industrial effluent, harmful household waste such as paint, medicines, and other hazardous chemicals and cleaners may also lead to contamination of surface water if not disposed of safely.

"Waste disposal is a big concern and should be addressed in time. It is important to identify the source of heavy metals in the city's lakes, even though their concentration is not very high currently. This responsibility lies with the state pollution control board. Pollution source identification is a mandate even by the National Green Tribunal and Supreme Court through their past orders," added Ramprasad.

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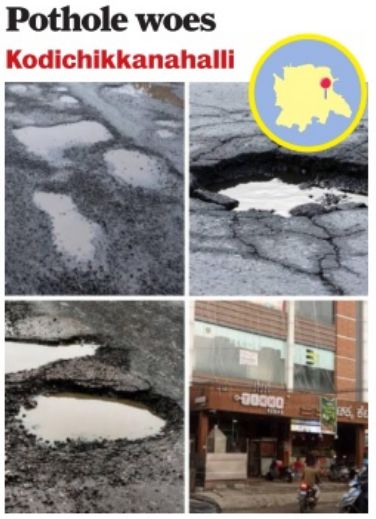
Pit trouble

BTM Layout

A large pit on the sewage bridge near Sangeetha Mobile Store, 7th Cross, BTM Layout 2nd Stage, poses a serious risk to two-wheeler riders, frequently trapping their tyres.

Pothole woes

Kodichikkanahalli



The stretch of Kodichikkanahalli Main Road, from the vegetable market to the petrol pump, is filled with potholes, making it a nightmare for drivers, especially two-wheelers.

Parking chaos

Kaval Bairasandra

Illegal parking on Ambedkar Medical College Road, Kaval Bairasandra, has stalled tarring work, causing inconvenience to pedestrians and drivers.

City air clears, but not out of woods yet

Bengaluru pollution sees 24% drop in PM10, but increasing number of vehicles continues to worsen air quality

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Under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), Bengaluru has recorded a 24% reduction in PM10 (Particulate Matter) levels over the last six years, according to data from the Central Environment Ministry.

While the average annual concentration of this harmful pollutant was 92µg/m3 in 2017-18, it has gone down to 70µg/m3 in 2023-24. However, the city is still far away from achieving the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Under NAAQS, the annual average PM10 value should be under 60µg/m3.

City-based researchers say this drop can be attributed to an increase in vehicles on city roads, leading to low average vehicular speed.

"As the number of vehicles is increasing, the average speed is going down, causing less resuspended dust particles, and thus lower PM10 concentration. Moreover, a large amount of dust particles in 2017-18 also came from metro construction work mostly in the city centre. These factors might have contributed to comparatively lower levels," said Professor Gufran Beig, Chair at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS).

NCAP was launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) in January 2019 to improve air quality in 130 nonattainment and million-plus cities through the implementation of state and city-level clean air action plans. NCAP envisages a reduction in PM10 level by up to 40% or achievement of national standards of 60µg/m3 by 2025-26.

Sales of private cars and two-wheelers have been on the rise in the city

PM2.5 more lethal

Experts say while the drop in PM10 is welcome news, it is PM2.5 that should be closely monitored, especially looking at the surge in private vehicles and emissions from the industries.

Recent statistics from the Karnataka Transport Department show that the total number of private two-wheelers and cars in the city has now reached more than 1.05 crores.

Sales of private cars and two-wheelers in Bengaluru increased by more than 23% in October this year compared with last year. The city registered 66,297 new private vehicles compared with 53,512 in October 2023. This included the registration of 50,512 private two-wheelers and 15,785 new cars. Private cars and two-wheelers now form 87.6% of the total vehicles on the city's roads.

"The health impact of PM2.5 is more adverse and thus should be the most important aspect in the calculation of AQI (Air Quality Index). Unless we start focusing on the most toxic air pollutant, the air pollution level in Bengaluru will be underestimated," said a city-based air quality expert.

India scenario

The top five cities with the maximum percentage drop in PM10 levels are Varanasi (68%), followed by Bareilly (61%), Firozabad (59%), Dehradun (56%), and Dhanbad (56%).

City-specific clean air action by all 130 nonattainment and million-plus cities in the country targets air pollution sources like soil and road dust, vehicular emissions, waste burning, construction & demolition activities, and industrial pollution. While 48 Million Plus cities are being funded under the XVth Finance Commission Million Plus City Challenge Fund, the remaining 82 cities are funded under the Control of Pollution Scheme of MoEF&CC.

The Central Environment Ministry provided an amount of Rs 11,211.13 crore to cities during 2019-20 till 2023-24 under the programme. Due to efforts made under the program, 97 out of the 130 cities have shown improvement in air quality in terms of annual PM10 concentrations in 2023-24 when compared to the levels of 2017-18. As many as 55 cities have achieved a reduction of 20% and above in PM10 levels in 2023-24.

Film Chamber in spotlight over PoSH Committee lapse

The Karnataka State Women's Commission has issued a formal complaint to district authorities regarding the Film Chamber's non-compliance in establishing an Internal Committee (IC). Despite receiving extended deadlines, the Kannada Film Chamber of Commerce (KFCC) has failed to meet the requirements under the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act, prompting the Commission to escalate the matter.

Following a September 16 directive, the Commission had granted a fortnight to the KFCC to either form an IC or provide valid justification for their inability to do so. The initiative gained momentum after the Hema Committee's findings on the Malayalam film industry revealed widespread sexual harassment and poor working conditions. This significant development sparked calls for similar protective measures across regional cinema industries, particularly in Kannada films, urging need for safeguards. Despite submitting two requests for deadline extensions to the Women's Commission, the KFCC has shown no substantial development yet. –BMB

Home Minister vows action against drug peddlers

Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara stressed the need for stringent action against drug peddlers on Saturday, during the inauguration of new police quarters and police station buildings. He also warned that Inspectors, Deputy Superintendents, and Police Commissioners would be held accountable if drug-related activities persisted in their jurisdictions. Parameshwara noted, "Drugs worth Rs 250 crore have been seized in the city over the past year." –PTI

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Public Notice

Last Opportunity for the Homebuyers of Unitech Projects for Change of Options from "Refund" to "Possession" and "Updation of contact details" on the Company's web-portal

Kind attention of the Homebuyers of pan-India Unitech Projects is invited to the Public Notice dated 18.11.2024, uploaded on the Company's website **www.unitechgroup.com**, vide which final and last opportunity has been given for change of option from "Refund" to "Possession" on or before **31st December, 2024**.

Likewise, the Unitech's Homebuyers have been granted one last opportunity to update their Contact Details and other particulars, in the Company's web-portal on or before 30th November, 2024, vide Public Notice dated 16.10.2024 uploaded on the Company's website and also published in National/ Regional Newspapers on 18.10.2024. The Management has decided to extend the last date for the updation of Contact Details and other particulars also upto **31st December, 2024** in order to keep the same co-terminus with the Change of options.

The Homebuyers are advised to access the Unitech's web-portal for further details and modalities to be followed for changing their Options from "Refund" to "Possession" and "Updation of contact details" and other particulars.

It is made clear that this is the **last and final opportunity for changing the Options** from "Refund" to "Possession" and **"Updation of contact details"** and other particulars. It may be noted that no further opportunity shall be granted in this behalf. Further, it may be noted that no individual communications would be sent to the Homebuyers for this purpose.

It is further made clear that those homebuyers who fail to update their Contact details within the specified timeline, the allotment of their Residential and/ or Commercial Units shall be cancelled forthwith and the amount paid by them shall be forfeited. This publication may be treated as the **Final Notice for the resumption of their Units**, for which no further correspondence shall be entertained. The Company also proposes to initiate appropriate proceedings under the provisions of the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988 and the rules made thereunder against such allottees.

A.K. Yadav
Chief Executive Officer
Unitech Group of Companies

BBMP to secure city lakes with CCTV surveillance

Civic agency plans to enhance Bengaluru's water bodies by clearing encroachments, improving flood management, and boosting water quality through scientific methods

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BBMP is fencing reclaimed lake land, including 22.5 guntas at Kaggadasapura Lake, to prevent encroachments

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike has proposed installing CCTV cameras across all city lakes, implementing scientific methods to maintain water quality, enhancing facilities for walkers, and establishing robust flood management systems. This initiative aims to transform and rejuvenate Bengaluru's lakes comprehensively.

BBMP's Special Commissioner for Forests, Environment, and Climate Change, Preeti Gehlot said, "We are actively working to identify and clear encroachments on lakes. Acting on the High Court's directives, BBMP has been conducting surveys and clearing encroachments to protect lakes and restore public land. Of the 202 lakes under BBMP's control, surveys have been completed for 162 lakes, with 49 lakes already declared encroachment-free. Additionally, efforts are underway to clear government encroachments from 23 lakes in coordination with zonal offices. As part of the drive, encroachments on 13 lakes across four zones have been cleared, reclaiming 7 acres and 3 guntas of land valued at 242.5 crore. Measures are being taken to install fencing around the reclaimed areas to prevent further encroachments. In the Mahadevapura Zone, 2 acres and 6 guntas of land were reclaimed from Doddanekundi Lake, while 8 guntas were cleared from Vibhutipura Lake, with fencing being installed. The reclaimed lands are valued at 75 crore and 8 crore, respectively."

She said that in the East Zone, encroachments on Kaggadasapura Lake were removed, including a shed occupying 2.5 guntas. Additionally, 22.5 guntas of vacant land were fenced, with the total reclaimed area valued at 22.5 crores. In the Bommanahalli Zone, 30 guntas of land were reclaimed from Konanakunte Lake, while 12 guntas and 28 guntas were cleared from Arekere Lake and Subbarayan Lake, respectively. These reclaimed lands are valued at 30 crore, 12 crore, and 15 crore. "In the Yelahanka Zone, encroachments were cleared from seven lakes, including Avalahalli, Yelahanka, Medi Agrahara, Agrahara, Kattigenahalli, Narasipura, and Singapura Lakes. A total of 2 acres and 14 guntas were reclaimed, with the land valued at 80 crore", Gehlot added.

Lake protection policy 2024

Earlier, the BBMP's Forest wing had submitted a four-page affidavit to the High Court, outlining planned developmental measures for the lakes. However, the execution of these initiatives hinges on the court's approval of the new lake conservation policy. While BBMP intends to collaborate with private entities for funding and implementation, concerns have been raised over the potential privatisation of lake management. The government clarified that assistance will only be sought for maintenance, and ownership of the lakes will remain with the BBMP. The court has stressed that no policy can be implemented without its consent, making the future of the conservation policy dependent on the court's verdict.

> **"BBMP's initiative to rejuvenate lakes is commendable, but it must ensure transparency and accountability in its collaboration with privae entities** – Advocate

Decade-long PIL on lake encroachments

The PIL, filed in 2014 by Citizens' Action Forum and other organisations, sought government directives to clear encroachments and protect Bengaluru's lakes and stormwater drains. Over the years, the court has issued several instructions to BBMP and the government. It even ordered Mumbai-based NEERI (National Environmental Engineering Research Institute) to conduct a study on the status of Bengaluru's lakes. NEERI's reports, submitted in 2019 and 2020, recommended short-term and long-term measures for lake conservation. However, the implementation of these recommendations remains pending, leaving the PIL unresolved.

Proposed lake development and facilities

The BBMP's comprehensive plan for lake rejuvenation includes several key measures aimed at ensuring their preservation and utility. CCTV cameras will be installed across lakes to improve surveillance and enhance safety. To increase water storage capacity, desilting efforts will be undertaken. A High Court advocate said, "BBMP's initiative to rejuvenate lakes is commendable, but it must ensure transparency and accountability in its collaborations with private entities."

Temporary ban on Ringer Lactate IV

Concerns surrounding recent maternal deaths in Ballari district have prompted the suspension of the Ringer Lactate solution in all government hospitals across Karnataka. Health Minister, Dinesh Gundu Rao said, "The decision was taken as a precautionary measure amid suspicions about the quality of the solution." The solution, commonly administered intravenously to restore hydration and maintain fluid balance in patients, had been procured from a private company through the Karnataka State Medical Supplies Corporation Ltd, officials confirmed.

Reports from the health department highlighted an alarming rise in maternal deaths at the Ballari district hospital between November 9 and 11, following caesarean procedures. Of the 34 surgeries conducted during this period, seven patients reportedly experienced severe complications, including acute kidney injury requiring dialysis and multi-organ dysfunction. Four of these patients passed away, while two were discharged and one remains under care at the Vijayanagar Institute of Medical Sciences (VIMS) in Ballari. Minister Rao, addressing the media, clarified that a direct link between the Ringer Lactate solution and the fatalities has not been established. However, given the suspicions, samples of the solution were sent for comprehensive testing.

In response to the incidents, a team of specialists was sent to Ballari to conduct an in-depth investigation. Their findings did not implicate any negligence on the part of the medical staff, who reportedly took every possible measure to save the affected patients. However, the specialists' report raised concerns about the Ringer Lactate solution, echoing suspicions that prompted the health department to initiate additional testing. Minister Rao emphasised that a decision on the solution's use will be made after the results are available. **— BMB**

Maximum cases reported in B'luru

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

More cases in city

According to statistics from the Directorate of Child Protection, there have been 3,953 cases registered over the past four years, related to petty, serious, and heinous crimes. Of these, 1,588 were categorised as heinous, 1,470 as serious, and 823 as petty crimes. The highest number of cases have been reported in the state capital, Bengaluru, with 1,110 cases, followed by Mysuru with 390, Bengaluru Rural with 383, Vijayapura with 264, Shivamogga with 207, Dharwad with 195, and Kalaburagi with 186.

Trend among teenagers

According to sources, the majority of those involved in these criminal activities are teenagers between 17 and 18 years old, who are on the cusp of entering college and shaping their future. A total of 2,551 cases were registered against minors in this age group, while 575 children aged 15-16 have also been involved in criminal activities. Various departments, including the Directorate of Child Protection, District Child Protection Units, the Women and Child Welfare Department, and the Education Department, are working together to organise awareness programmes about crime prevention for school and college students across districts.

Role of social media

Sources said that social media and films have emerged as major influences contributing to juvenile crime. With changing times, the nature of crimes and methods have also evolved. Videos on social media and content from films are inspiring some children to take the wrong path. This is particularly evident in cases like POSCO crimes.

Maternal deaths: Probe ordered

Taking the recent maternal deaths in Ballari district seriously, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday ordered an inquiry into such incidents at various hospitals of the state and announced compensation of Rs 2 lakh each to the victims' family.

Amid concerns that the maternal deaths could be linked to substandard Ringer Lactate solution that is administered intravenously to restore hydration and fluid balance in the body, he ordered suspension of the drugs controller and blacklisting of Paschim Banga Pharmaceutical that supplied the solution and also to prosecute the company.

The CM on Saturday chaired a high-level meeting regarding the maternal deaths in Ballari. Four women have died this month in the district. I have asked for the drugs controller to be suspended immediately. I have directed to blacklist the Paschim Banga Pharmaceutical Ltd and to prosecute it. Also, it should be ensured that the company pays compensation to the victims," Siddaramaiah said.

Speaking to reporters here after the meeting, he said, the government has decided to give compensation of Rs 2 lakh each. **– PTI**

THE SUNDAY READ

PIC COURTESY: SAHARSH

Bengaluru: Muse of dreams and reinvention

From nurturing raw talent to reigniting passions, Bengaluru stands as a transformative force in Ankur Mohan's journey of rediscovering his voice and creating music that resonates

| R Prashanth Vidyasagar
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Nestled in the cultural heart of Karnataka, Bengaluru is a city where creativity flourishes. A sanctuary for dreamers and artists, where music resonates as deeply as its tech-savvy heartbeat. For artists like Ankur Mohan, the city has been more than just a backdrop; it has been a protagonist in his journey of learning, unlearning, and rediscovering the soul of music.

Born and raised in Ranchi, Ankur Mohan found his first sparks of inspiration in his hometown's lively music scene. But it was only after moving to Bengaluru in 2014 that his musical journey truly began to take shape. "Bengaluru gave me the space to experiment, fail, and grow," Ankur recalls. "It's a city where you're encouraged to be yourself and where you're applauded for it."

Decade of transformation

Over the past 10 years, Mohan has witnessed how Bengaluru's music scene has evolved. From weekly jams to the shifts in venue preferences, the city's dynamic nature has played a significant role in shaping his craft. "When I started, the city was buzzing with open jams. My first was at Jamathon, held at a venue in Domlur. It was surreal, plugging into a Marshall JCM 800 and playing for a crowd that truly loved rock music."

As trends shifted, Bengaluru continued to adapt. "There was a phase where venues pushed for mixed setlists, which opened doors for experimentation. Recently, there's been a revival of all-English bands. It feels like the city is always in dialogue with its artists, reflecting and redefining its musical identity" says Mohan.

The silence and the comeback

However, not every chapter has been easy. The 2019 ban on live performances was a tough blow for musicians, and the pandemic that followed brought the industry to a standstill. "It was heart breaking," Mohan shares. "From performing every weekend to having no gigs for months it took a toll. I retreated into a shell and focused on recording covers at home. Music became my solace during those difficult years."

In January this year, Mohan decided to return to the stage. His first performance, an intimate solo act at a restaurant in Whitefield, reignited his passion. "I was nervous, but the joy I felt on that stage was unmatched. It reminded me of why I started performing in the first place." This moment marked the beginning of his journey back to live music and the creation of new original tracks in collaboration with producer Sanoli Chowdhury.

Bengaluru: The nurturer of dreams

For Mohan, Bengaluru has been more than just a city; it's been a community, a classroom, and a stage. "The music scene here thrives on collaboration and encouragement. When you're starting out, the support from fellow musicians and the direction set by established artists make all the difference."

Some breweries and restaurants have been instrumental in his comeback, offering spaces where he can blend his rock roots with newer pop influences. "The vibe of Bengaluru's venues is unique. They're not just places to perform; they're spaces where creativity is celebrated," adds Mohan.

From solitude to sharing

Mohan's latest venture, his upcoming debut solo album to be called 'About Time' feels like the culmination of his years in the city. "Those years of inactivity felt like being in a cocoon. But they also gave me clarity about the music I wanted to create. Sharing my originals now feels liberating, even though it makes me vulnerable. Bengaluru has taught me to embrace that vulnerability and turn it into strength."

Mohan's latest tracks, Road 405 and Never Waking Dreams, are whispers of serenity in a noisy world. Infused with the warmth of blues, the ease of soft rock, and the depth of his soul, his music offers a quiet refuge, a balm for the mind and a perfect companion to Bengaluru's winter.

Looking ahead

With a renewed sense of purpose, Mohan is finalizing demos for a full-length album and performing regularly at some of the city's most iconic venues. His goal is simple yet profound, to keep creating music that resonates, while staying true to the joy of the process.

For Ankur Mohan and countless others, Bengaluru isn't just a city; it's a transformative force, a muse that challenges and nurtures in equal measure. It's a place where artists find not only their audience but also themselves.

As Ankur Mohan's story unfolds, so does Bengaluru's enduring legacy as a city that turns dreams into melodies and ambitions into anthems, a city that continues to inspire one note at a time.

> **"The vibe of Bengaluru's venues is unique. They are not just places to perform; they're spaces where creativity is celebrated**
>
> – Ankur Mohan

Dearer millet

Ragi prices go up by 37.5% to ₹55/kg

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TWEETS @sridharvMirror

Even as the demand for ragi has surged in recent years, there has also been an increase in the price of the nutritious millet. Retail prices that previously ranged from 40-45 per kg, have now climbed to 55 per kg. Adding to the costs, the government has set a minimum support price (MSP) of 4,290 per quintal for ragi this year, up from 3,846 per quintal last year. Traders said that with an increasing number of people opting for ragi, its popularity has grown.

Impact of weather

In 2022, heavy rains caused widespread damage to crops across the state, and drought conditions last year further hampered ragi cultivation. Delayed monsoons this year are expected to impact production, potentially leading to further price hikes. Karnataka, along with neighbouring Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra, leads ragi cultivation in India. Karnataka produces around 11.27 lakh tonnes of ragi annually, covering approximately 8.60 lakh hectares of farmland. Key ragi-producing districts include Bengaluru Rural, Kolar, Tumakuru, Chikkaballapur, Ramanagara, Mysuru, and Hassan.

Quality concerns

Raghuveer, a proprietor of Rathu Provisions Store, highlights that the market is struggling to source quality ragi. "Last year, we sold ragi at 45 per kg, but this year, prices have risen to 55 due to a shortage of good-quality grain." Farmers like Vasanth Kumar from Chikkaballapur express concerns over rising labour and equipment costs. "Though we managed to grow some ragi despite erratic rains, labour shortages have forced us to rely on machines for threshing. The rental costs for these machines have increased from 2,500 to 3,000 per hour this year, adding to the transportation expenses," he explains.

Support price

Under the MSP scheme for 2024-25, the government has set prices to procure high-quality crops, including ragi at 4,299 per quintal and regular paddy at 2,300 per quintal. While this benefits farmers, the rising costs of production and logistics remain a challenge. India annually cultivates around 26 lakh tonnes of ragi, with Karnataka contributing nearly 75% of the total production. Other major ragi-producing states include Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, and Madhya Pradesh.

On the other hand, the farmers said that though the recent rains supported a healthy ragi crop, harvesting is turning out to be a challenge. The lack of agricultural labourers and the exorbitant costs of harvesting machines have forced them to pay thousands of rupees to get crops harvested. "Harvesting machines from Andhra Pradesh have flooded Chikkaballpur and Bengaluru Rural, but their operators are demanding exorbitant fees. Rates have surged to 4,000– 5,000 per hour, and smaller landholders often face even higher charges. Apart from financial strain, machine harvesting has its downsides. It often results in shredded ragi stalks, reducing the availability of quality fodder for livestock. This has forced some farmers to opt for manual labor despite the higher costs, ensuring better quality fodder and a cleaner harvest.

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORYBEHINDTHEPHOTO

QUIET AMIDST CHAOS

Gandhi Mandapam, Puducherry, when visitors were barred from entering due to high sea tides

The picture was clicked by reader **Sridhar Comaravalli**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Bengaluru shivers as Fengal brings chilly air

Cyclone Fengal did not bring expected rainfall; however, it dipped temperature significantly

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While Cyclone Fengal did not deliver the expected rainfall in Bengaluru on Saturday, it caused a significant drop in temperatures, leaving residents feeling the chill. The daytime temperature plummeted to around 22°C, marking one of the coldest days of the year for the city. This drastic dip in temperature had Bengalureans bundling up, even as the skies remained overcast with only light to moderate rain in some areas.

Dr N Puviarasan, a scientist at the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) Bengaluru, attributed the cool conditions to Fengal's influence over south interior Karnataka. Although heavy rain was recorded in districts like Mysuru, Mandya, and Chamarajanagara, Bengaluru largely escaped with minimal precipitation. Neighbouring regions, including Kolar, Chikkaballapura, and Tumakuru, also witnessed light to moderate showers. In its forecast, the IMD highlighted that heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely in Kodagu and Mysuru districts in the coming days, while moderate rains are expected in Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru Rural, Tumakuru, and surrounding districts. Coastal Karnataka is likely to experience light to moderate rainfall, with drier conditions expected in parts of north interior Karnataka.

As the week progresses, Bengaluru is expected to see cloudy skies with light to moderate rainfall over the next 48 hours. Maximum temperatures are predicted to hover around 24°C, while minimum temperatures will stay close to 20°C. Residents are advised to stay informed about changing weather patterns, especially those travelling to rain-affected districts.

Meanwhile, authorities held a meeting on Saturday to take up precautionary measures anticipating Cyclone Fengal. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath said, "Due to gusty winds, there is a threat of tree fall, and hence I have instructed the deployment of all 28 tree-clearing teams. Officials should respond to complaints about fallen trees and branches and ensure their immediate removal." He added that officials have been directed to take proactive measures in flood-prone areas within their respective zones. Pumping equipment must be kept ready to tackle waterlogging, and sandbags should be placed in areas previously affected by flooding as a precautionary measure. Nath has mandated that all zonal officers and engineers remain on duty, even on holidays. Senior officials in each zone have been tasked with overseeing these activities to ensure swift responses. "To prevent water stagnation, earth excavators will be deployed to clean debris from major stormwater drains (rajakaluves), ensuring a smooth flow of water," Nath instructed.

People embracing warm clothes due to cold weather

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2015, former media executive Indrani Mukerjea was taken into custody and accused of killing her daughter Sheena Bora. When Indrani's former driver admitted to his involvement in the 2012 alleged murder, the case was still unsolved. Indrani was charged with strangling Sheena and dumping her body in a jungle, along with her ex-husband Sanjeev Khanna and driver Shyamvar Rai.
The case has been widely reported and has taken many different turns. Throughout the trial, Indrani has insisted on her innocence and charged her ex-husband, Peter Mukerjea, with involvement in the murder. In relation to the case, Peter Mukerjea was also taken into custody. With multiple hearings and witness testimony, the trial has been going on for a number of years. The case has brought into question the ties between the people involved as well as the motivations behind the murder. The trial's verdict is still pending.

GET HEARD WITH MIRROR

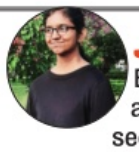
9591233247

Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

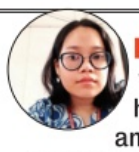
TAPTHECHATTER

where Bengalureans speak their mind

What do you think of reading culture in Bengaluru?

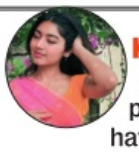


Janhvi Aditi, BM Reader
Bengaluru's reading culture feels a bit under the radar. I don't often see people lost in a book. When I do spot a reader, they're usually diving into something social media has put on a pedestal. I wish there was more love for classics.

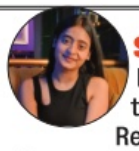


Khumpiri, BM Reader
think with time, reading as a habit has started to see a decline amongst youngsters. But with book clubs coming up, I think reading as an activity is being encouraged. Many book clubs like Cubbon Reads are great examples.

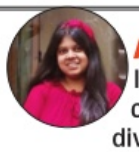
Anshika Pan, BM Reader
Whenever I'm out in the city, I always see at least one person with a paperback. These sightings happen everywhere—in the metro, parks, cafes, bus stops. If you ever walk into a bookstore or stop by a book stall, you'll never be alone.



Kamia Namitha, BM Reader
Honestly, I feel like it's very pretentious a lot of times. Many have barely any opinions, but they are very superficial. On the other hand, there are a lot of people who actually like reading books and read them for content.



Shrijal Singh, BM Reader
I see more people reading here than I have seen in any other city. Reading is as common here as music in restaurants and bars. The book clubs and discussions that revolve around books are also supportive of making people read more.



Angika Rajshree, BM Reader
In Bengaluru, I've found the reading culture to be incredibly rich and diverse. I love that there are always events happening, like book fairs, author signings, and festivals which bring together readers of all ages.

SPEAK TO US

How good or bad is last-mile connectivity if you use public transport in the city?

If you want to be featured in this section, mail us your answer to this question, in 25 words, with 'Tap The Chatter' in the subject line. Mail us with your name, occupation & a picture at WhatsApp us on 9591233247 or mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com

Justice prevails after insurer forsakes man whose bike got stolen

Insurance company forced to pay up after man harassed to keep paying EMIs for stolen bike goes to consumer court

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After enduring a journey marked by theft, bureaucratic hurdles and persistence, justice finally came to a man on Constitution Day, when a consumer court asked the insurance company to pay up. Muniswamy Gowda, a city resident, had filed a complaint against two financial institutions due to poor service and mental distress following the theft of his two-wheeler in November 2022.

Gowda, a farmer, bought the motorcycle in September and insured it for ₹66,395 with a private insurance company and financed it with a ₹75,470 loan. He used to pay monthly EMIs of ₹4,948 for the bike that was used to ferry his daughter to college. However, on November 18, the motorcycle, parked at home, was stolen in the night.

Despite extensive search, it remained missing. Gowda filed a complaint at Kadugodi Police Station on November 22, marking the start of his battle against an unresponsive system.

Gowda then submitted a claim to the private insurance company. Despite timely document submissions and relentless follow-ups, the company rejected his claim on March 22, 2023, citing an incomplete police report. This impasse caused Gowda mental distress, with loan payments looming large, but he remained hopeful.

In July 2023, the police issued the final report. Gowda then submitted all required documents, including the final report, registration certificate, and loan details, to the insurance company. Yet, his claim remained unresolved, with no response from the insurer.

Meanwhile, the loan company continued to demand EMI payments for the stolen vehicle. Gowda reported receiving daily threatening calls and messages, despite notifying the company about the theft. "They used to call me every day for the repayment," he told BM.

With support from the Consumer Protection Act, Gowda stood his ground, challenging the powerful insurance conglomerate.

Consumer forum ordered the insurance company to pay the insurance amount to Muniswamy Gowda

Legal proceedings

The complaint, filed under the Consumer Protection Act 2019, argues that the insurance company failed to adhere to the policy terms, while the loan company neglected to consider the theft report and continued demanding payments.

Consumer rights advocates emphasise the importance of timely responses and ethical practices to protect customers from undue hardship.

Pradeep Kumar PK, senior advocate, at Pradeep Kumar PK & Associates law firm, explained that all insurance terms and conditions are often hidden in fine print, which can leave policyholders feeling vulnerable if they aren't aware of the details.

"Insurance companies collect premiums but sometimes exploit policyholders, particularly in medical healthcare, especially within private institutions. This trend has intensified since covid-19, with many companies focusing on increasing the number of policyholders for profit rather than their intended purpose. These companies often charge substantial amounts. Therefore, it is essential for anyone purchasing insurance to thoroughly review the terms and conditions, even though it might seem tedious," he said.

He added that the issue is now aggravated as many players are involved. "Companies often require policyholders to accept these terms, who sometimes complete formalities without fully realising it. This poses challenges for illiterate individuals, who may not understand that they need to declare the actual value of their insured assets, such as vehicles," Pradeep added.

In this case, the consumer forum provided justice to a policyholder, but the outcome was limited because the insurance coverage was insufficient, he said. Although the order was passed swiftly, it only partially secured the policyholder.

> **"Insurance companies collect premiums but at times exploit policyholders, particularly in healthcare, especially in private firms. This trend has intensified since covid-19 , with many firms focusing on increasing the number of policyholders**

Harassment for loan repayment

Though in Gowda's case there was a happy resolution, it ended in tragedy for techie Gaurishankar Sharma. The 40-year-old unemployed father of two, died by suicide near Anekal railway station after alleged harassment by loan recovery officials. Forced out of his flat due to 18 months of unpaid loan installments, Sharma's pleas for time were ignored. His family, unaware of the debt, learned about the situation only after his death. Despite a relative paying the dues, the trauma led Sharma to take his life, highlighting the distress caused by aggressive loan recovery practices.

Aji Zacharia, advocate at Pradeep Kumar PK & Associates law firm, said that in cases where individuals fail to pay their EMIs, banks often resort to unprofessional practices, taking advantage of their power and influence. He said that if something like a theft happens and one fails to pay the EMI, the bank can behave in an extremely unprofessional manner. "They will file criminal charges against you, using the blank cheque they hold and pre-dated cheques obtained through the court, which you have no access to. Each time the bank files a cheque bounce case, they will often choose a jurisdiction far from where you live. For instance, if you're from South India, they might file the case in Gurgaon or Delhi; if you're in Delhi, the case could be filed in Chennai," he said.

However, the Supreme Court has agreed to transfer such cases in a limited number of instances. "A Supreme Court ruling once stated that a cheque must be presented to the bank where the drawer issued it. However, the banking lobby is so powerful that it successfully lobbied in Parliament to reverse this, granting banks the freedom to engage in such unethical practices, leaving people defenceless," Pradeep added.

Technician attempts suicide over film funds

A 25-year-old drone technician, Santosh, attempted suicide at his Magadi Road residence on Thursday, allegedly driven by financial losses and threats linked to his work with the Cult movie team. The film features Zaid Khan, son of Minister Zameer Ahmed, and is directed by Anil Kumar.

According to police reports, Santosh tried to hang himself from a ceiling fan but was rescued by his family and rushed to a nearby hospital. Authorities were notified by hospital staff, leading to an investigation and the registration of a non-cognizable offense (NCR) based on a complaint from his sister.

Santosh had been hired to capture drone shots for the Cult movie at a daily rate of₹25,000. During filming in Chitradurga, his drone collided with a windmill, resulting in substantial financial losses.

Sunil, a manager from the production team, had allegedly promised to cover the damage and provide an official assurance letter. However, when Santosh sought compensation, he was reportedly threatened and humiliated by the film's director and producer. **BMB**

Caste abuse: CID report confirms Muniratna's voice

After examining evidence, the CID had informed the SIT that BJP MLA Muniratna's voice matches the abusive audio recordings central to allegations of caste-based abuse. This development intensifies the legal challenges facing the legislator, already embroiled in cases involving honeytrap scandals, rape, and conspiracy.

The controversy began when Narayanaswamy, husband of former Laggere corporator Manjula, filed a detailed complaint against Muniratna and five others—former corporator Venkatesh (NTR), and individuals identified as Sunandamma, Jayamma, Lakshmamma, and Latha—at the Nandini Layout Police Station. Narayanaswamy alleges that Muniratna harassed him for over eight years, illegally recorded private videos of him and his wife, and conspired to tarnish their reputation. He claims that due to political enmity, the MLA influenced police officers to file false cases against him and tried to have them killed by tracking their location.

The complaint also implicates police inspectors Ayyanna Reddy and Yathiraju Naidu, alleging they filed false cases on Muniratna's instructions. **BMB**

Temporary power outage at Majestic bus stand

A temporary power outage at the BMTC Majestic Bus Stand earlier on Saturday caused minor disruptions but was swiftly managed by authorities. The outage, attributed to routine transformer maintenance, plunged the station into partial darkness, affecting thousands of daily commuters at peak hours.

Commuters expressed frustration over what they perceived as poor management. The condition of the road near the bus stand further added to their woes, making navigation challenging in the dark. Several passengers, especially women and children, felt anxious to reach home safely.

To mitigate the impact, BMTC has activated standby generators to provide adequate lighting across all platforms and public areas. Commuters navigating the expansive bus terminal were visibly relieved as platform lighting remained functional, preventing disruptions in evening travel schedules.

BMTC's Public Relations Officer assured that the outage is temporary and power supply is expected to be fully restored within an hour.

"We assure you that the power supply will be restored within one hour. Meanwhile, we have ensured the operation of generators to provide adequate lighting in all public areas and platforms for the convenience and safety of passengers," the statement continued. **BMB**

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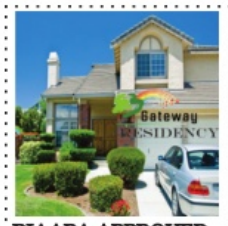

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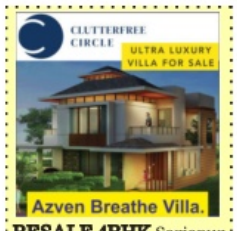

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I, CHANDRASHEKAR, Residing at Flat No. 1006, 'D' Black, Belvedere UKN Properties, Navarathna, Agrahara, Bengaluru -562157, Karnataka, have changed my name to CHANDRASHEKAR PATIL, vide affidavit dated: 30.11.2024 before notary V. RAJASHEKHARA, Bengaluru.

I, SUHAS GOWDRA CHANDRASHEKHAR, Residing at No. 8, 6th Cross, 2nd Block, Behind Vishal Mart, H.M.T. Layout, Nelagadarana halli, Bengaluru -560073, Karnataka, have changed my name to SUHAS MALIGE GOWDRA CHANDRA SHEKHAR, vide affidavit dated: 30.11.2024 before notary V. Rajashekhara, Bengaluru.

I, SAVITA, Residing at Flat No. 1006, 'D' Black, Belvedere UKN Properties, Navarathna, Agrahara, Bengaluru -562157, Karnataka, have changed my name to SAVITA PATIL, vide affidavit dated: 30.11.2024 before notary V. Rajashekhara, Bengaluru.

I, Kalpesh Hirachand Jain Alias Kalpeshkumar Jain S/o Hirachand Jain R/o #0, Anekallappa Mutt Lane, 26th Cross, Cubbonpet, B'luru 560002 have changed my name as KalpeshKumar Bafna affidavit Dt.30/11/2024 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Harish Basavaiah S/o Basavaiah R/o #28,1st Main,4th Stage,TK Layout Mysore 570009 have changed my name to Nanjungud Basavaiah Hareesh for all purposes.

I Murali S/o Subramani R/o 183 Varadanahalli, Doddaballapura, Bangalore rural 561203, Karnataka, have changed my name to Murali Subramani

I, Chaitrika Prabhakar Hegde R/o Bolasuttu, Hullunde, Siddapura, Uttara Kannada 581331 have changed my name to Chaitrika Hegde.

I, Johar Pasha Piyara Jan S/o Pyaru sab Ward no 1 Venkatagirikote Chintamani 563125 I have changed my name to Johar Pasha.

LOST & FOUND

LOST: I, Mahesh.L S/o Late. Lingaiah, Aged about 49 Years, Residing at No.1395, 4th"B" Cross, Sannaki Bayalu, Vrusha bhavathi Nagar, Bangalore Stating that, I have lost the Original registered sale deed of Site No.5 formed in Sy.No.16, Measuring East-West 36ft and North-South 40ft totally measuring 1440sq.ft, situated at Kengeri Hobli, Sonnenahalli Village, Bengaluru Sourth Taluk while I was shifting my house from Byadarahalli to Sannakki Bayalu. I have sworn before Ramachandrappa.C Advocate & Notary Bangalore on 16/11/2024 in this regard. If anyone finds the above said original sale deed document contact the above address or Mobile Number: 9902599638.

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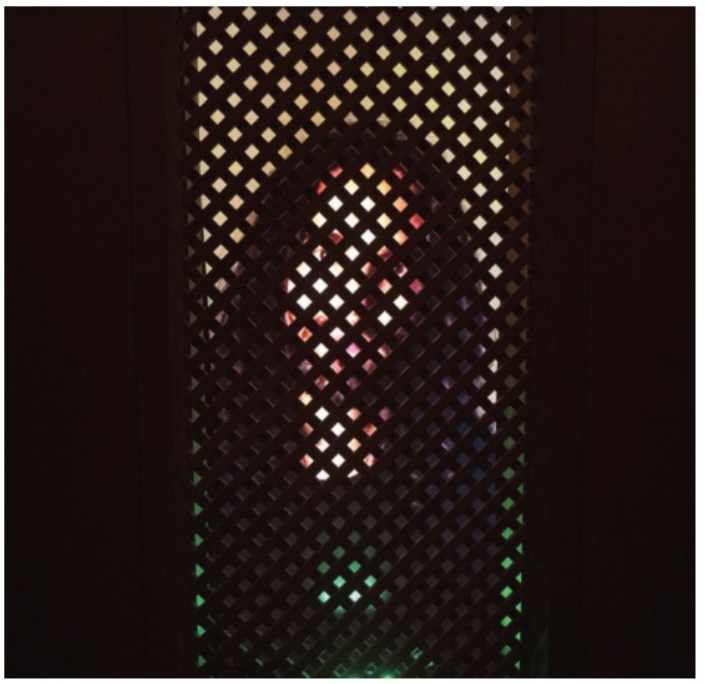
Researchers, religious leaders release findings from 2 -month experiment through art in chapel

'AI JESUS' AVATAR TESTS MAN'S FAITH



Would you trust an "AI Jesus" with your innermost thoughts and troubles?

Researchers and religious leaders on Wednesday released findings from a two-month experiment through art in a Catholic chapel in Switzerland, where an avatar of "Jesus" on a computer screen — tucked into a confessional — took questions by visitors on faith, morality and modern-day woes, and offered responses based on Scripture.

The idea, said the chapel's theological assistant, was to recognise the growing importance of artificial intelligence in human lives, even when it comes to religion, and explore the limits of human trust in a machine. After the two-month run of the "Deus in Machina" exhibit at Peter's Chapel starting in late August, some 900 conversations from visitors -- some came more than once — were transcribed anonymously. Those behind the project said it was largely a success: Visitors often came out moved or deep in thought, and found it easy to use.

A small sign invited visitors to enter a confessional and below a lattice screen across which penitent believers would usually speak with a priest, a green light signaled the visitor's turn to speak, and a red one came on when "AI Jesus" on a computer screen on the other side was responding.

Often, a lag time was needed to wait for the response – a testament to the technical complexities. After exiting, nearly 300 visitors filled out questionnaires that informed the report released Wednesday.

Philipp Haslbauer, an IT specialist at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts who pulled together the technical side of the project, said the AI responsible for taking the role of "AI Jesus" and generating responses was GPT-4o by OpenAI, and an open-source version of the company's Whisper was used for speech comprehension.

An AI video generator from Heygen was used to produce voice and video from a real person, he said. Haslbauer said no specific safeguards were used "because we observed GPT-4o to respond fairly well to controversial topics."

All topics

Visitors broached many topics, including true love, the afterlife, feelings of solitude, war and suffering in the world, the existence of God, plus issues like sexual abuse cases in the Catholic Church or its position on homosexuality.

Most visitors described themselves as Christians, though agnostics, atheists, Muslims, Buddhists and Taoists took part too.

About one-third were German speakers, but "AI Jesus" — which is conversant in about 100 languages — also had conversations in languages like Chinese, English, French. "What was interesting (was) to see that the people really talked with him in a serious way. They didn't come to make jokes," said chapel theologian Marco Schmid, who spearheaded the project. Most visitors were aged 40 to 70, and more Catholics respondents found the experience stimulating than did Protestants, the report showed.

Schmid was quick to point out that the "AI Jesus" – billed as a "Jesus-like" persona – was an artistic experiment to get people thinking about the intersection between the digital and the divine, not substitute for human interaction or sacramental confessions with a priest, nor was it intended to save pastoral resources.

"For the people it was clear that it was a computer ... It was clear it was not a confession," Schmid said. "He wasn't programmed to give absolutions or prayers. At the end, it was more of a summary of the conversation."

The Catholic Church from the Vatican on down has been wrestling with the challenges -- and possible opportunities -- presented by the explosion in public interest in AI since generative artificial intelligence captured the world's attention two years ago when OpenAI's ChatGPT made its debut.

Chatbots like ChatGPT are powered by algorithmic models trained on vast pools of text and other data to mimic speech and generate seemingly unique and human-like responses.

Haslbauer is sensitive to public reaction and has noted chatter on social media saying the project is "blasphemous" or the "work of the devil." "If you read comments on the internet about it, some are very negative — which is scary," Haslbauer, whose long-haired look featured as a basis for the image of the virtual Jesus.

For a troubled world

In a demonstration of the technology in the chapel, Haslbauer queried "AI Jesus" about its message for a troubled world, and about whether AI could be helpful as a way for people to find God.

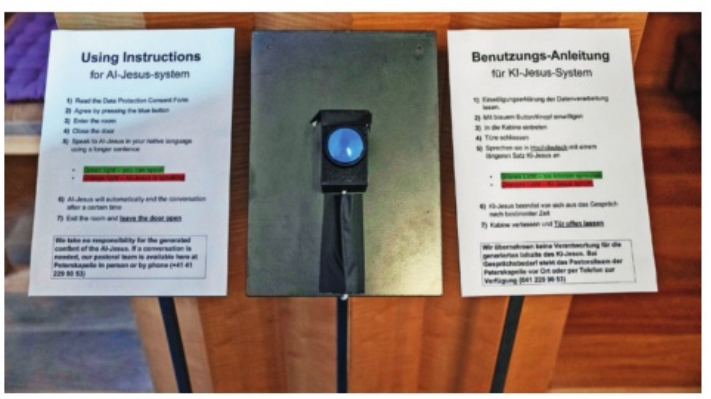
"All knowledge and wisdom ultimately come from God," the chatbot said in a soothing voice, after a pause to respond, and the image briefly crackled. "If used wisely, AI can indeed be a tool to explore the wonders of creation, deepen our understanding of Scripture, and foster connections among people."

"Yet it remains essential to seek God with all your heart and soul beyond any technology," it added.

Kenneth Cukier, a journalist, author and expert with the U.S.-based nonprofit group called "AI and Faith," said if "AI Jesus" helps people connect deeper to themselves and the world, it "has to be a good thing." "The risk is that it pulls people, ultimately, farther away from that which is more meaningful, deeper and authentic in spirituality," said Cukier, co-author of "Big Data: A Revolution that Will Transform How We Work, Live and Think."

For Schmid, the exhibit was a pilot project — and he doesn't foresee a second coming of "AI Jesus" anytime soon. **—AP**

"For the people it was clear that it was a computer ... It was clear it was not a confession. He wasn't programmed to give absolutions or prayers. At the end, it was more of a summary of the conversation



BITS & BYTES

META FACES TRIAL

Facebook owner Meta Platforms will face a trial in October 2025 in Spain over a 551 million euro ($582 million)complaint lodged by more than 80 media companies accusing it of unfair competition in advertising, a Madrid court said on Friday.

The hearings will be held on Oct. 1 and 2, the 15th Madrid commercial court said in a statement.

The AMI media association, which represents 87 Spanish media firms, filed a lawsuit last year alleging Meta violated EU data protection rules between 2018 and 2023. **Reuters**

CANADA TO SUE GOOGLE

Canada's antitrust watchdog said Thursday it is suing Google over alleged anticompetitive conduct in the tech giant's online advertising business and wants the company to sell off two of its ad tech services and pay a penalty. The Competition Bureau said that such action is necessary because an investigation into Google found that the company "unlawfully" tied together its ad tech tools to maintain its dominant market position.

The matter is now headed for the Competition Tribunal, a quasi-judicial body that hears cases brought forward by the competition commissioner about non-compliance with the Competition Act. **Reuters**

STARTUP IN SPACE

Private sector and startups have a key role to play as India looks to boost its space activities to grab more share of the global market, ISRO Chairman S Somanath said on Friday.

He was speaking on 'ISRO's vision and the rise of India's space Tech companies' at the country's flagship startup festival Huddle Global 2024, organised by Kerala Startup Mission here.

"Despite being an acknowledged space power, India's share of global business is just two per cent at USD 386 billion. India plans to raise it to USD 500 billion by 2030 and hit USD 1.5 trillion by 2047," Somanath said in his address during the startup festival at Kovalam. **PTI**

HEALTH TIP: Pomegranate juice may aid in the reduction of systolic blood pressure

Jamuns are low in calories and high in minerals such as iron, folate, potassium, and vitamins

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Winter delicacies

Feel the nip in the air? Try these heart-warming recipes

SURTI UNDHIYU

INGREDIENTS

For Base (For Grinding):
- Green Garlic – ½ Cup
- Grated Coconut (Without the dark skin) – ½ Cup
- Peanuts Raw – 1 TBSP
- Green Coriander Fresh – 06 TBSP
- Spices & Masala Mix:
- Green Chilli Paste – 1 tbsp
- Ginger Paste – 1 tbsp
- Haldi Powder – 1 tbsp
- Dhania powder – 1 tbsp
- Jeera Powder – 1 tbsp
- Ajwain – 1 tbsp
- Salt to taste
- Sugar – 1 tbsp
- Hing Powder – 1 tbsp
- Green Garlic – 100 gm
- Whole Jeera – 1 tbsp
- Imli – 50 gm
- Fresh grated Coconut – 100 gm
- Chopped fresh Green Coriander – 100 gm

For Stuffing Masala:
- Fresh Grated coconut – 30 gm
- Green Dhaniya – 30 gm
- Haldi Powder – 1 tbsp
- Salt – 3 gm
- Coriander powder – 1 tbsp
- Cooking oil – 1 tbsp

Fresh Vegetables:
- Shakarkand – 75 gm
- Purple Yam (Ratalu) – 75 gm
- Yam (Suran) – 75 gm
- Baby Potato – 75 gm
- Tindola – 50 gm
- Small Baingan – 04 pcs
- Raw Banana – 01 pcs
- Surti Papdi – 75 gm
- Valor Papdi – 75 gm
- Green Peas – 75 gm
- Suran – 75 gm
- Lilva Dana – 50 gm
- Tuvar Dana – 50 gm

For Tempering (Tadka):
- Cooking Oil – 100 gm
- Garlic paste – 1 tbsp
- Hing – 1 tbsp
- Ajwain – 1 tbsp
- Green Chilli paste – 1 tbsp
- Mustard – 1 tbsp
- Green Garlic – 50 gm

For Methi Muthiya:
- Fresh Methi – 2 Cup
- Green Chilli paste – 2 tbsp
- Ginger Paste – 1 1/2 tbsp
- Garlic Paste – 1 tbsp
- Salt – 1 tbsp
- White Till – 1 tbsp
- Hing – ½ tbsp
- Haldi Powder – 1 tbsp
- Sugar – 1.5 tbsp
- Curd – 1 tbsp
- Oil 2 tbsp
- Besan – 1 Cup
- Whole Dhaniya – 1 tbsp
- Whole Jeera – 1 tbsp

PREPARATION METHOD:
- Make a criss-cross slit on each baby potato, banana piece and brinjal taking care not to separate the segments.
- Stuff the vegetables evenly using ½ of the coriander-coconut masala mixture and keep aside.
- Combine the surti papdi, purple yam, yam, toovar dana and the remaining masala mixture in a bowl, mix well and keep aside to marinate for 8 to 10 minutes
- Heat the oil in pressure cooker, add the carom seeds, asafoetida and soda-bi-carb and saute on a medium flame for few seconds.
- Add the stuffed baby potatoes and brinjal, all the marinated vegetables, salt and 2 cups of hot water, mix gently and pressure cook on a high flame for 2 whistles.
- Allow the steam to escape before opening the lid.
- Transfer the cooked vegetables into a big non-stick pan, add the stuffed bananas and methi muthias, toss gently and cook on a slow flame till the bananas are tender, while stirring occasionally.
- Serve the Undhiyu hot garnished with coriander.

LILI HALDAR NU SHAAK

INGREDIENTS
- 250 gms Fresh Turmeric
- 80 gms Ghee
- 2 tbsp Ghee
- 1 Bay Leaf
- 1 Black Cardamom
- 1 tbsp Ginger, finely chopped
- 1 cup Onion, chopped
- 1/2 tbsp Green Chilli, chopped
- 1 tbsp Garlic, chopped
- 1 tsp Jeera (Cumin Seeds)
- 1 cup Tomato, chopped
- 1 tsp Salt
- 1/2 tsp Red Chilli Powder
- 1 tsp Coriander Powder
- 1 cup Curd
- 1/4 cup Green Peas
- 1/4 cup Spring Onion, chopped
- 2 tbsp Cashew
- 1 tbsp Kasuri Methi
- 1 tbsp Coriander, chopped

METHOD:
- Wash and clean fresh turmeric roots. Peel and grate them finely.
- In a pan, heat a generous amount of ghee and add the freshly grated turmeric. Roast it on medium flame for 4-5 minutes until golden. Set it aside.
- In another pan, add more ghee. Add bay leaf and black cardamom, let them splutter.
- Incorporate finely chopped ginger and sauté until fragrant.
- Add chopped onions and cook until they turn light golden brown.
- Add chopped green chillies, minced garlic, and cumin seeds. Cook until the mixture becomes aromatic.
- Add chopped tomatoes and sauté until they soften and blend with the other ingredients.
- Season the mixture with salt, red chilli powder, and coriander powder.
- Add curd to the pan.
- Introduce green peas and cashews into the curry.
- Add the roasted fresh turmeric to the pan, ensuring it gets well-coated with the curd-based mixture.
- Allow the curry to simmer, letting the flavors meld together.
- Sprinkle kasuri methi and chopped coriander for a fresh aroma.

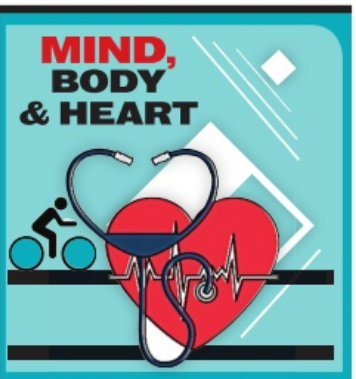
GAJAR HALWA

INGREDIENTS

For Gajar ka Halwa
- 2 cups thickly grated carrot
- 1 tbsp ghee
- 2 tbsp milk
- 4 tbsp sugar
- 4 tbsp grated mawa (khoya)
- 1 tbsp raisins (kismis)
- 1 tbsp chopped almonds (badam)
- ½ tbsp cardamom (elachi) powder

METHOD OF PREPARATION
- To make Gajar ka halwa, heat the ghee in a pressure cooker, add the carrots and saute on a medium flame for 4 to 5 minutes, while stirring continuously.
- Add the milk, mix well and pressure cook for 1 whistle.
- Allow the steam to escape before opening the lid.
- Transfer into a broad non-stick pan, add the sugar, mix well and cook on ahigh flame for 5 too 7 minutes while stirring continuously.
- Add the mawa, mix well and cook for more 1 to 2 minutes, while stirring continuously
- Add the raisins, almonds and cardamom powder and cook for another 1 minute.
- Serve the Gajar ka halwa hot or warm.

Recipes by Rasotsav - Chef Madan Singh



All you need to know about...

Benefits of water

2 advantages
Researchers, who reviewed 18 studies on benefits of drinking water, found the most evidence related to preventing kidney stones and helping people lose weight.

The magic number
Drinking eight cups of water a day significantly lowered one's chances of getting another kidney stone, the researchers at the University of California San Francisco found.
They added that evidence from several studies suggested drinking about six cups of water a day helped adults lose weight. However, a study involving teenagers found that drinking a little more than eight cups of water a day had no effect.

Other benefits
Further, studies raised the possibility of benefits for patients with migraine, urinary tract infection, diabetes and hypotension (low blood pressure) despite the limited quality and quantity of scientific evidence on the benefits of water, the authors said in the study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Network Open.
"Given the low cost and low adverse-effect profile of water, further well-designed studies should assess benefits in these specific conditions," the authors wrote.

Before meals
The authors said encouraging people to drink water before meals would be a simple and cheap intervention that could have huge benefits given the increased prevalence of obesity.
Adults experiencing recurring headaches were found to feel better after three months of drinking more water, they added.
Drinking about four more cups of water a day for eight weeks was found to help diabetic patients whose blood glucose levels were elevated. Women with recurrent urinary tract infections. -PTI

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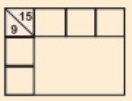
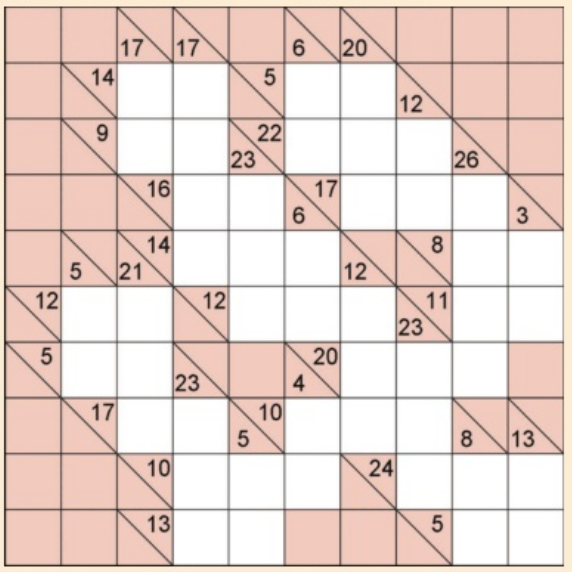
Kakuro

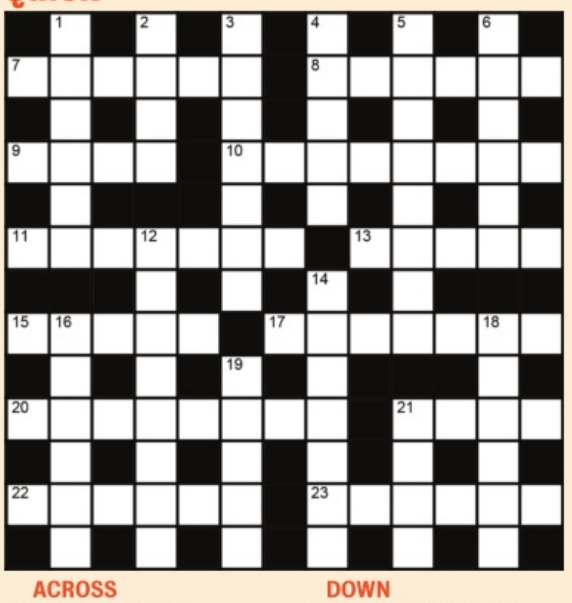
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Steering device (6)
8 US moon mission (6)
9 Liquid measure (4)
10 Come close (8)
11 Idea or notion (7)
13 Indian language (5)
15 Combination informally (5)
17 The negative electrode (7)
20 Buoyant (8)
21 Indonesian island (4)
22 Buries or entombs (6)
23 Scolded or found fault constantly (6)

DOWN

1 City in Switzerland (6)
2 Modify the text (4)
3 Bangalore cinema home to India's first 4k screen (7)
4 Glad or blithe (5)
5 Large block of stone (8)
6 Located (6)
12 Not yet defeated (8)
14 Estimating (7)
16 Lubricating (6)
18 Melodious (6)
19 Wash; clean (5)
21 Paper containers, perhaps (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: S EQUALS C

CTZ MYWC YH VYZCWG U MZZA WZMUJZM UQ YIXZSCM NEQ SEQ'C CYRST.

Linemaro

Can I follow you home? My parents told me to follow my dreams

Mindchow

Be what you want to be, not what others want to see

Joke of the day

I bought a doughnut and they gave me a receipt for the doughnut. I don't need a receipt for the doughnut, I'll just give you money and you give me the doughnut. End of transaction. We don't need to bring ink and paper into this

Loop

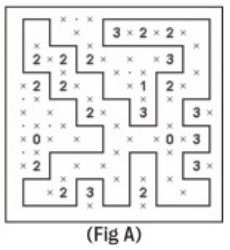
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

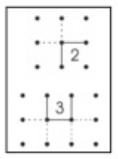
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)

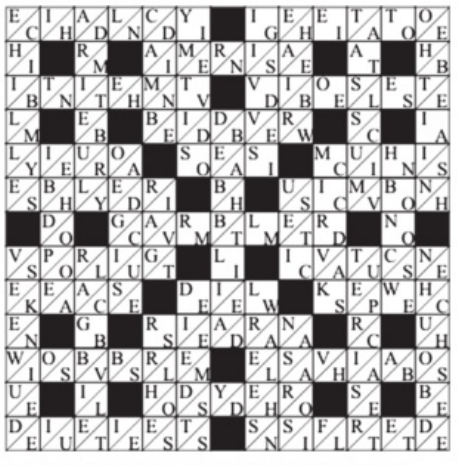


(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed

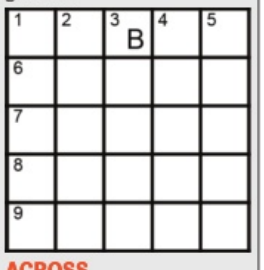
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

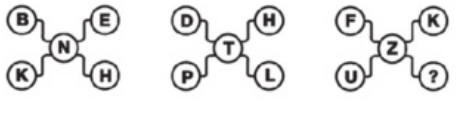
1 Bared; 6 Or ape;
7 Laver; 8 Neces;
9 At sal

DOWN

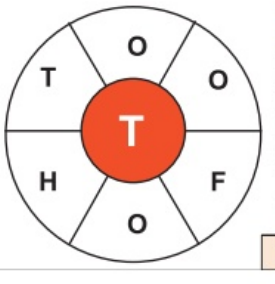
1 Roads; 2 At pec;
3 Be lev; 4 An are;
5 Earls

Mensapuzzle

Which letter completes the puzzle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

03 Average; 04 Good; 05 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

1								3
	5	3			8		9	
			4		1		2	
	7	9		5		3		
			7		2			
		2		6		8	1	
	3		6		9			
	8		3			7	4	
9								5

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 13

3 4 5 7

Medium = 2

5 7 9 9

Hard = 46

3 6 8 6

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

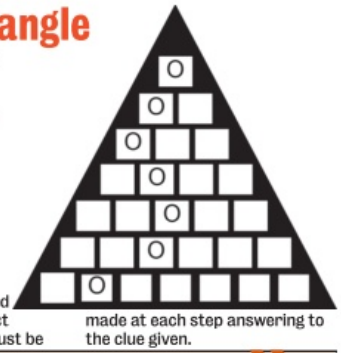
Differences: 1. Leg is moved. 2. Stripe is different. 3. Woman's arm is moved. 4. Window is missing. 5. Pool design is different. 6. Boy is thinner.

Riddler

A man in a restaurant asked a waiter for a juice glass, a dinner plate, water, a match, and a lemon wedge. The man poured enough water onto the plate to cover it. "If you can get the water on the plate into this glass without touching or moving this plate, I will give you $100," the man said. "You can use the match and lemon to do this." A few minutes later, the waiter walked away with $100 in his pocket. How did the waiter get the water into the glass?

Alpha triangle

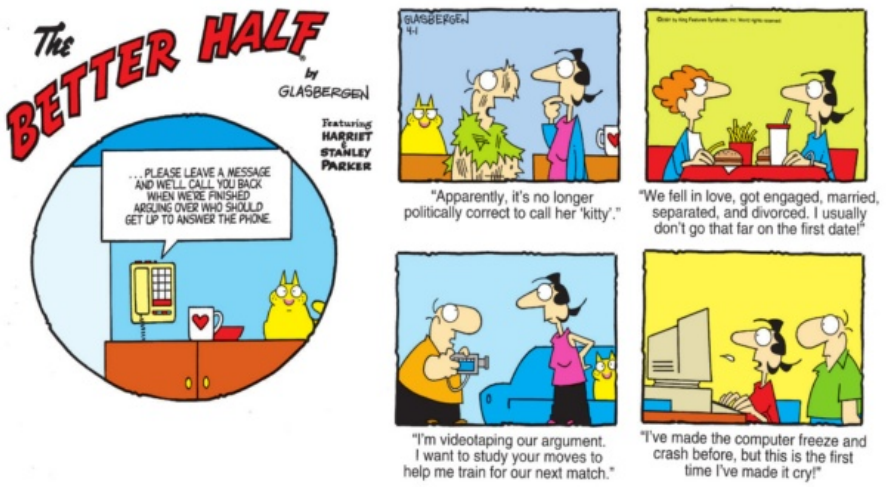
1 Atomic number 8
2 Not off
3 Low number
4 Dunce cap shape
5 Tea treat
6 Witches
7 Consults



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
by GLASBERGEN
Featuring HARRIET & STANLEY PARKER
...PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE AND WE'LL CALL YOU BACK WHEN WE'RE FINISHED ARGUING OVER WHO SHOULD GET UP TO ANSWER THE PHONE.
"Apparently, it's no longer politically correct to call her 'kitty'."
"We fell in love, got engaged, married, separated, and divorced. I usually don't go that far on the first date!"
"I'm videotaping our argument. I want to study your moves to help me train for our next match."
"I've made the computer freeze and crash before, but this is the first time I've made it cry!"

FLASH GORDON
12-18
BY JIM KEEFE
AS NIGHT FALLS ON THE PLANET MONGO, A TERRIFYING TRANSFORMATION TAKES PLACE ABOARD FLASH'S SHIP!
THORNE, THE SHIP'S ON AUTOPILOT. DISTRACT BULLOK. I'LL GET THE TRANQUILIZER GUN!
DISTRACT HIM?! YOU DISTRACT HIM!
RRRRRAAHR!
WATCH OUT!
KRASH!
RRRURK
GOT HIM! QUICK...THE TRANQUILIZER GUN!
THE CONTROL PANEL'S SMASHED...
...WE'RE GOING DOWN!
DESCENT INTO DARKNESS!

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today is a good day; your financial health is likely to improve. You may benefit from past investments. You might gain control over spending money on unnecessary items, which could boost your savings. Lovebirds are advised to be polite in conversations with their partners; otherwise, conflicts may arise.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, you are blessed by the Moon; it's a good day. You have vitality and energy and may enjoy your work. Romantic moments with your spouse could improve family harmony. You will likely plan and initiate a new project; your perfectionism may help you design an effective flowchart. Job aspirants may find a good opportunity. Lovebirds are advised to avoid discussing trivial topics.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today, you may feel disappointed. It is advised to control your arrogance; otherwise, your words could lead to losses or misunderstandings. Lovebirds should be cautious in discussions to avoid negatively affecting their relationship.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you are blessed by the Moon, and new sources of income may open up. Past investments might start yielding profits. Losses could turn into gains, boosting your financial health. Health issues concerning your parents may be resolved.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, you may feel delighted and will likely be busy at work. Your seniors may appreciate your efforts, and you might experience changes in your position, place, or responsibilities at work, possibly in the form of a promotion. Your opponents and hidden enemies may now be under control. Singles and lovebirds may make important decisions about marriage with the support of relatives or friends.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, the messy situations from previous days may come under control as you are blessed by the Moon. You can now begin pending tasks. With blessings, your hard work may be rewarded. Gains in business might improve your finances. You may spend money on artefacts or literature and might even plan for overseas travel.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you may be occupied with family matters. You might explore additional sources of income. Your interest in artefacts, movies, or glamour may enhance your creativity. Lovebirds may have clarity regarding their relationships. Students are likely to make progress toward their career goals.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, you may face health issues that affect your professional and domestic life. Spouse-related health concerns might upset you. Your patience may be tested repeatedly. It is advised to avoid making investments in new business projects to prevent losses. Students should avoid distractions and focus on their studies.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, you are blessed by the positive Moon. You may feel healthy, and old health issues might be cured. Stuck funds may be recovered, and you might apply for a loan to purchase luxury items.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, you may feel dull, which could lead to laziness and carelessness. You might struggle to focus on work, and impatience could have a negative impact on you. Concerns about the health of your children or spouse might upset you. Avoid making investments in assets. Lovebirds should refrain from arguments about family matters.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, you may sense negative vibrations around you, making you feel unhappy. Avoid investing in worthless assets. Your friends may not be supportive, so manage your expectations to avoid further disappointment. Trust your intuition before making significant decisions today.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today, you may successfully implement business plans with the support of your subordinates. You might participate in social or family gatherings, which could expand your network. A short business trip may be on the horizon, bringing benefits soon.

KIDZONE

Sanjanna V, Bengaluru

KS Ramya Murthy, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

RIDDLER First, the waiter stuck the matchstick into the lemon wedge, so that it would stand straight. Then he lit the match, and put it in the middle of the plate with the lemon. Then, he placed the glass upside-down over the match. As the flame used up the oxygen in the glass, it created a small vacuum, which sucked in the water through the space between the glass and the plate. Thus, the water got the water into the glass without touching or moving the plate. You can try this experiment at home with appropriate supervision.

STRIKE OUT

D	U	T	I	E	S	S	I	F	T	E	D			
E	I		O	D	D	E	R	S		E				
W	O	B	B	L	E		L	A	V	A	B	O		
	E	B		S	E	D	A	N		C		H		
K	E	A	S		D	E	M		S	P	E	C		
	S	P	R	I	G		L		C	A	U	S	E	
		O		C	A	M	B	L	E	D		O		
S	H	Y	E	R		B		S	I	M	O	N		
L	I	R	A		S	A	S		M	U	N	I		
L	E		E	I	D	E	R		C		A			
I	N	T	E	N	T		V	I	O	L	E	T		
H		R		A	E	R	I	E		A		B		
C	H	A	N	C	Y		G	H	E	T	T	O		

QUICK

				G										
			G		N		E		S		T			
		I		N		T		E		R		S		
	N		A		G		G		E		D			
		F		L		O		A		T		I		N	G
	B		A		L		I				U			
		I				E		R				U		
	C		O		M		B		O		C		A	
		N					I				G			
	T		H		O		U		G		H		T	
H		I		N		D		I						
	G				S				Y		L		E	
P		I		N		T			A		P		P	
R		I			V			P			N		A	
R		U		D		D		E		R		A		P
Z		E		U			H			M		P		

MENSA PUZZLE P. In each diagram, starting on the top left and moving clockwise in a spiral towards the centre, letters increase in value by 3 for the left hand diagram, 4 for the middle, and 5 for the right hand diagram.

SUDOKU

1	2	8	5	9	6	4	7	3
4	5	3	2	7	8	1	9	6
6	9	7	4	3	1	5	2	8
8	7	9	1	5	4	3	6	2
3	6	1	7	8	2	9	5	4
5	4	2	9	6	3	8	1	7
7	3	5	6	4	9	2	8	1
2	8	6	3	1	5	7	4	9
9	1	4	8	2	7	6	3	5

ALPHA TRIANGLE
0 , On, One, Cone, Scone, Crones, Conifers.

LOOP

GO FIGURE
Easy
7 + 4 + 5 – 3 = 13
Medium
7 + 9 – 9 – 5 = 2
Hard
6 + 3 x 6 – 8 = 46

KAKURO

FAST FIVE

D	E	B	A	R
O	P	E	R	A
R	A	V	E	L
S	C	E	N	E
A	T	L	A	S

BULL'S EYE SOLVE IN 1M
hoot, HOTFOOT, tootle, tootch, foot
√(14-13) = 1

QUOTE UNCODE The sort of poetry I seek resides in objects man can't touch.

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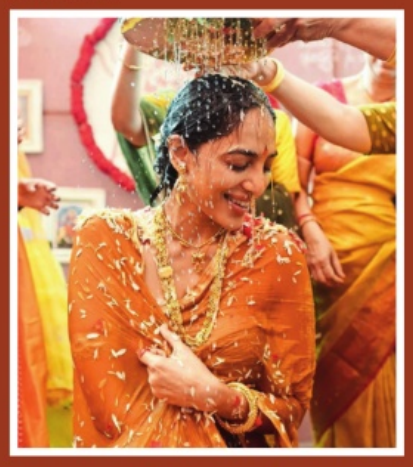
Bride and beautiful

Naga Chaitanya and Sobhita Dhulipala started their pre-wedding festivities with a Haldi ceremony on Saturday. The

actress took to her Instagram profile to share some unseen pictures from the Telugu rituals Raata Sthaapana and Mangalasnanam ahead of their wedding.

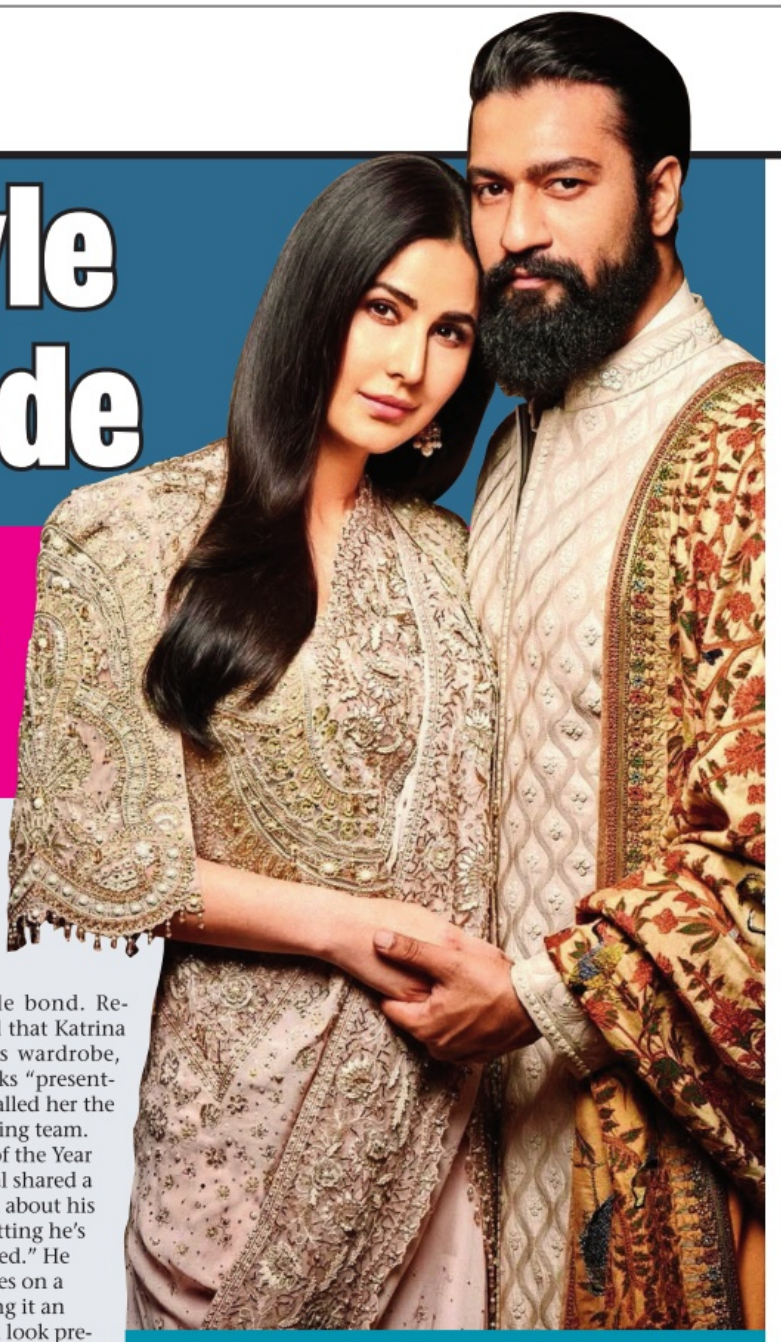
Social media is in awe as Sobhita shared some mesmerising clicks from the celebrations, wearing a yellow silk saree paired with a bandeau blouse. She complemented the elegant mustard yellow saree with a golden temple jewelry collection.



In one of the pictures, she was seen sitting in a large vessel filled with water as her family and relatives applied Haldi on her. Another picture featured Sobhita posing with her parents and sister, Samantha. The actress captioned the post, "Raata Sthaapana and Mangalasnanam." Many fans called her a 'goddess' as soon as she shared the pictures online.

Earlier, a source close to the wedding revealed that the couple would follow traditional Telugu rituals for their prewedding ceremonies, including the Pelli Raata ceremony, which is typically conducted before the bride becomes a bride. This was followed by the Mangalasnanam ritual, the Telugu equivalent of Haldi. **–ETimes**

Style guide



Katrina is Vicky's fashion guru

Vicky Kaushal and Katrina Kaif continue to charm fans with their adorable bond. Recently, Vicky shared that Katrina helps him with his wardrobe, making sure he looks "presentable". He jokingly called her the "subedar" of his styling team.

At the GQ Men of the Year event, Vicky Kaushal shared a hilarious confession about his fashion sense, admitting he's "fashion handicapped." He revealed that he relies on a team, jokingly calling it an "army," to help him look presentable.

He shared, "I'm a really fashion handicapped person. I rely on an army to make me a little presentable."

Vicky playfully shared that Katrina Kaif often advises him on his outfits, calling her the "subedar" of his styling team. He also revealed his favorite dish—aloo paratha with white butter and mango pickle and shared how their food preferences have blended. Katrina now enjoys his love for parathas, while he has developed a liking for her pancakes.

In a chat with BBC Asian Network, Vicky Kaushal expressed heartfelt admiration for Katrina Kaif, describing her "superstar soul" as what captivates him most. He shared that being with her completes him, fills the gaps in his life, and inspires him to be the best version of himself.The 'Sam Bahadur' actor described Katrina Kaif as his "reality check," praising her for keeping him grounded while motivating him to grow. He admires her honesty, resilience, and determination, qualities that helped her achieve stardom despite challenges. Her grace and strength continue to inspire him every day, he said. **–ETimes**

How to catch a ghost

NAA NINNA BIDALARE (KANNADA)
2.5 RATING ★★½☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Naveen GS
- **ACTORS** Ambali Bharathi, Panchi S, KS Sridhar, Srinivasa Prabhu, Harini Srikanth, Sreeunde Raghu, and Mahantesh Hiremath.
- **Duration** 142 minutes
- **Certification** UA

Director Naveen GS has tried his best to keep audiences engaged throughout the movie that is different from other horror movies released so far. The movie also educates the audiences about memory loss and growth hormone deficiency.

The movie begins with a team of a TV channel named Ghost Hunter visiting a farmhouse at Gerudada Estate. The team wants to verify the existence of ghosts at the farmhouse. As soon as the team reached the farmhouse, lights began flickering and the team members began hearing peculiar sounds.

At this juncture, the scene shifts to Mysuru where Rishi (Panchi S), an event manager, along with his team are seen buying flowers at the market. Rishi takes care of Charvi (Ambali Bharathi), who suffers from retrograde amnesia. Later, he decides to take her to Gerudada Estate. He comes to know that the estate belongs to Charvi's father.

He meets Ramanna, who used to work at the estate and comes to know Charvi's real name is Anjali and her younger sister's name is Charvi. You have to watch the movie to know why Rishi was looking after Anjali and what happens to them.

Though it is Ambali's maiden movie, she has done a great job. Her dialogue delivery and expressions, especially in the climax, are exemplary. Panchi S has acted well. KS Sridhar, Srinivas Prabhu, Seerunde Raghu have provided good support. Mahantesh Hiremath tried to tickle audiences' funny bones, but failed.

It is worth a watch if you like horror films. **–Y Maheswara Reddy**

Of youthful love

MEGHA (KANNADA)
2.5 RATING ★★½☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Charan
- **ACTORS** Kiran Raj, Kajal Kunder, Rajesh Nataranga, Shobaraj, Sangeetha Anil, Nagendra Sha, Sourabh Kulkarni, Taranga Vishwa.
- **Duration** 150 minutes
- **Certification** UA

Megha, a film based on a real life incident, will leave you feeling happy. Director Charan has ensured all elements to make it a feel good movie. The movie highlights the importance of bonding between parents and children. The movie conveys a message to youth on love, infatuation and responsibilities and also on the need to move on with life despite disappointments and breakups.

The movie begins with a voice over of a girl asking her lover to forget her and making it clear that she has decided to follow her father's advice.

Later we see a group of drunkards attacking Megha (Kiran Raj) for no reason. Megha is admitted in a hospital for treatment. His father Chandrasekhar (Rajesh Nataranga) comes to know about it and advises him to forget the past and move on with life. Meanwhile, Megha (Kajal Kunder), a college student, is chided by her father (Shobaraj) for falling in love with a wrong person. He insists that she discontinue college and be ready to marry a person of his choice.

Both the hero and heroine happen to meet and come to know that they not only have similar names but also study at the same college and live in the same locality. They become friends and are set to fall in love. What happens to them is what the movie Megha is all about.

Kiran Raj, as a cynic, son, and lover, has acted well. Kajal Kunder has done justice to her role as the female lead. Character actors Rajesh Nataranga, Shobaraj, Sangeetha have provided good support. Nagesh Sha, as a hapless principal, has acted well.

It is worth a watch for all audiences. **–Y Maheswara Reddy**